

Tapes: 026, 027

Transcript of Interview with Dave Jones

December 22, 1997

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INTERVIEW WITH DAVE JONES

This is an interview with David Jones, the District Manager of the Medford District Office. He is retiring on January 3, 1998. Today is December 22, 1997.
[Interviewer's last name unknown]

KATE: I think I'd like to start out by asking you, Dave, about your professional career. If you can give us a rundown, starting with where you were educated and what your college experience was and what happened after that.

DAVE: Well, my first year I went to what was then known as Mesa Junior College in Grand Junction, Colorado, and that's a 4-year college. Then I transferred and completed my education with a Bachelor of Science degree in Forest Range Management from Colorado State University.

KATE: That was forest range management?

DAVE: Forest Range, a dual major.

KATE: At Colorado?

DAVE: State University.

KATE: Colorado State. And what happened next? You graduated. How was the job market and where did you go?

DAVE: Well, when I got ready to graduate, my senior year. I think it was about November/December of my senior year, we had recruiters from the Forest Service come up to the University and talk to us and myself included and the job market sounded pretty good at the time. And then back later on.

KATE: Can I ask you what year this was?

DAVE: 1963, I graduated in '64. Then about February of 1964, another group of folks - the original group, I think, was from Region 2 of the Forest Service. And then in February, the folks that came in were representatives from Region 3. And, again, it sounded like the job market was promising, so I felt comfortable that I would have a job when I got out. Then when I got ready to graduate, about May of 1964, nothing was happening, and I had an all-day ecology field class. Then I came back in, and I was living with four, three other roommates, four of us together in an apartment. And he said he had a call from the Denver Service Center about a job offer. And, of course, that was exciting. So, when I called back it was the Denver Service Center switchboard. And that was it. And so I called the Forest Service. And they said, no that hadn't called and offered me a job. So, I called BLM, and they said, no they hadn't called offering a job. So, I was quite concerned that I might have lost the job because my roommate didn't get the right number. So, I was stewing over that. And early the next morning, I got a call from the BLM. And they, at that time, were undertaking an inventory, I guess, of the program. It was up in the Missouri River Basin area. And it would have been on some land classification efforts, inventory of resources and that sort of thing. And it would have taken a lot of travel and so forth working out of Montana. But it was the only permanent job offer I had at the time. So, I called back to the Forest Service and said, you know, things were looking pretty good; what happened? And they said, well, this year things are a lot tighter. And back in those days, you took the civil service exam. And from that you got a ranking or rating. And, I think, in the forestry program, I got a 94 score.

KATE: That was very good, as I recollect.

DAVE: And then in the range part, I had an 88 score. And so, they said normally, they got down through a 94 and were hiring mostly like a 96 which I'm sure included veteran's preference and things of that nature. So, anyway, the individual said that in Region 3, the only thing we have to offer is a GS-5, temporary position in the Santa Fe

National Forest. He said my advice is for you to go ahead and accept the job. Because originally my intentions all along had been to go to work for the Forest Service. And if at a later date, you want to consider going to work for the Forest Service, we'd be glad to visit with you. And his advice again because jobs were pretty tight. And, I guess I go back a little bit in that my advisor when I was in college was talking about it. He said, well, the Forest Service is a long-term traditional established agency, and BLM is sort of a new emerging organization at the time. And that was basically the only advice, I guess, he gave. You know, here's the comparative thing between the two agencies. So, anyway, because of that, I went and accepted the job. And at the time, there were only two of us out of the graduating class that had permanent jobs and both were with BLM.

KATE: Now was this job you took the one in the Santa Fe National Forest?

DAVE: No.

KATE: You decided to take the permanent job?

DAVE: The permanent job with BLM. Initially, I was supposed to be working out of Montana on the Missouri River Basin classification effort.

KATE: And so that's how you got started with the BLM?

DAVE: Well, that was initially how I was supposed to get started.

KATE: Okay.

DAVE: Now that changed too because along about May or the

first part of June, I was getting close to graduating. BLM called up out of Denver and said because of budgetary problems and so forth, that program fell through. Would you be interested in going to Montrose, Colorado? And I said, yes because it was kind of like don't throw me in the briar patch. Growing up in western Colorado, it was close to an area I had enjoyed and really liked when I was a kid. So, in June of 1964, I started out in the Montrose Colorado District.

KATE: And what was your job there? Your first one was to do temporary work but.

DAVE: The first job I had there was in the Division of Operations. And that involved project planning, development, and then contracts of provisions. Things like building fences, stock ponds, brush control, range land seeding.

KATE: A lot of different experiences, giving you kind of a broad background.

DAVE: Yes.

KATE: And what happened after that? This is where you started.

DAVE: I was in Montrose for roughly a year. Then, again, back in those days, your name came up on a list of eligibles for promotion. And so, I was offered a job in Monticello, Utah about 12 months after I was there for a promotion. And I said I would be willing to accept it, but I did not get that job. And then a total of 16 months after I started, I had an offer from the Roswell, New Mexico, District which I was accepted for.

KATE: They do a lot of oil and gas down in that area,

don't they? Was that something you were involved in at all?

DAVE: Well, what I did was, again, I transferred down in the Division of Operations and was doing a lot of brush control work for shinnery oak and mesquite brush. In fact, the first summer I was there, we spent 47 days straight of spraying brush and that would entail a lot of times getting up at 2 o'clock in the morning and driving up to the job site and as much as 50 or 70 miles out of town and if the wind was over 10 miles an hour, you couldn't spray. So, we turned around and did other project work.

KATE: How long did you do that?

DAVE: I was in that job for roughly 9 to 10 months. And they had always had two realty specialists in the District. And one of them switched over to become the Area Manager in that District and the other one was moved over to Las Cruces District. So, my boss came to the office asking people about would they be willing or interested in switching to become a Realty Specialist. And I said yes, I would try that. So, I worked one week with the realty specialist, and he handed me a case file and said you are one.

KATE: That was the extent of your initial training?

DAVE: Initial training. And then within a few months, they got me into real estate appraisal programs. And so, for 4 years, I did land appraisal work and general realty work, such as rights-of-ways, things of that nature. And so, then after 4 years of that, they had a vacancy come up for the Chief, Division of Operations, which I applied for and was selected.

KATE: That was the Chief of the Division of Operations?

DAVE: Right.

KATE: You were young to be taking on such a position, I think.

DAVE: Well, I can't remember what age I was, but anyway, I was selected for that and spent a year and a half on that job.

KATE: This was all at the Roswell District?

DAVE: Yes. I was there a total of 6 years.

KATE: So, what happened after Roswell?

DAVE: Well, I had worked with a fellow who was a marine in the military, and he had won two purple hearts, and he had talked to me about some other folks in BLM who had gone back to the Washington Office and enhanced their career and were able to move up the ladder. So, he said, you know, you're single, you ought to consider doing this. So, I applied for a job in the Division of Lands and Realty and was selected for a promotion to go back.

KATE: So, if I can just interject here, it was pretty much considered important to spend some time in Washington in order to move up the career ladder. Was that what was understood?

DAVE: It was very important as far as the Bureau was concerned to go back and get the Washington Office experience for key high-level jobs out in the field. And I certainly concur with that after having gone through that.

KATE: So, tell me a little bit about your Washington experience. I'm sorry, I missed what you said that you did.

DAVE: Well, I went back to a job in the Division of Land and Realty. And there was the. When the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Act was passed, there was an effort in there for. I'm sorry, no. The Alaska Native Claim Settlement Act was passed. That's what it was. And they had held a position in BLM to work on land withdrawal work to be utilized in the native selection process. So, I was supposed to go back, and the first 6 months, I would be working on land withdrawal efforts. A lot of it would be publications, Federal Register, land control orders. And, so about 2 years later, I went into my Division Chief and said, you know, I really enjoy working with the Alaska Native Claim program and I used to make about two trips a year up to Alaska for about 3 weeks at a time working on that. But I said it was interesting but I was getting out of the mainstream of the Bureau programs and wanted to switch into something else. And at the time, there were two of us working on that program and he said you're the only one who really knows the program, so I won't take you out of it at this point in time. And then after 2 years roughly were up, then is when the Trans-Alaska Pipeline Act was passed. And in that legislation, there was one paragraph that said that the Secretary of the Interior through the Director of BLM would conduct a national transportation utility corridor study. And so that was something that the Bureau was going to take on, and I and another fellow were then charged with writing position descriptions to try to set up a work group to do that effort. And in that process, the Division Chief said, you know, you expressed an interest in changing jobs, how about being the study manager for this thing? And I thought about it and thought well, you know, it was a new challenge. I was already back there. And so, I said, okay, I'll do that. And I had a staff of about five people that spent a year in a real short, condensed effort time frame, sort of a 6-month situation, produced a study report.

KATE: And this was for the Alaska Pipeline?

DAVE: No, this was actually the National Transportation Utility Corridor study in which... The question came up is, should we concentrate utility rights-of-ways or corridors instead of just letting them proliferate across the countryside. And so, the thing I found interesting in that was I was able to work with some very high-level company officials with the electrical utility industry, the road industry, the pipeline industry, and the Federal Highway Administration.

KATE: I want to ask, at this point, you began your career with BLM, in my understanding, just as BLM really was evolving into a modern organization that we kind of know today.

DAVE: No, not really, in that that didn't take place even until about 1969 and 70 when the National Environmental Policy Act was passed. So, this was sort of a precursor to that when I started in.

KATE: So, you were in Washington then in kind of the late 60's, though, is that correct?

DAVE: Actually, I went back in July of 1972.

KATE: Okay. So, you were there really as these environmental programs were beginning to be felt and really become important. I just want to ask you and we'll probably go back to this a little bit, but I want to ask you about that. I see that as an historical transition for BLM and it seems to me that you were in Washington during a fairly significant time and doing things that would obviously be very important in terms of the utility corridor study and working with railroad and pipeline and electric. So, did you feel this was near a transition, did you feel that these were things that you needed to be kind of inventing as you went along, how you approached your task because of these new...?

DAVE: Well, of course, the utility corridor study was started from scratch and getting the staff together and trying to figure out what we were going to do analyze that, you know, what our goals and objectives were. So that was a lot of new ground. And it was interesting because I remember one attorney with the railroad company was sort of a gruff old fellow and kept saying well, what do you want? And so as we went and got lined up he gave us all kind of information to provide us. And so that was a very interesting era, and it was a very big relief when I went up to the Hill to present a copy of that to the President and Senate and the House side. I said, here it is after we had gone through the Director and Secretary and got it delivered.

KATE: And what happened with that study?

DAVE: Well, actually the Bureau did incorporate some of the concepts of that study into establishing some utility corridors where feasible and practical because, again, a lot of times, companies, I would say probably more so the electric utility companies would just take off across country and take the path of least resistance, if you will, as far as being able to get rights-of-way and access from private land owners because of all the environmental analysis groups that the Federal government had to go through, a lot of times, they would avoid the federal lands if they could. I think it did result in establishing more corridors in the landscape throughout the West to minimize this proliferation. In some cases, it made more sense, to take off and go a different direction than stay within the corridor. I think that was instrumental in getting some of that effected in our management programs.

KATE: So, what happened after?

DAVE: So, then the fourth year, I was back there. I was back in DC 4 years. And the fourth year, I went back into a different branch of the division there. And worked on these major EISs that had just gotten started.

KATE: So, you were in the branch, you went into another branch.

DAVE: Right.

KATE: I didn't catch that.

DAVE: Well, the first, I guess the first 2 years, I was basically working in the Division. Then the third year was more in the Branch of Lands, I guess it was. Then the fourth year, it was the Branch of Realty where we were overseeing and reviewing these major EISs. And then I was Acting Branch Chief part of the time I was there too.

KATE: So, what were some of the major EISs?

DAVE: The Kaiparowits Plateau, Utah for power generation.

KATE: This which plateau?

DAVE: The Kaiparowits. It was in Utah. That one and the Alaska Pipeline, for example, which was proposed to take a pipeline from Los Angeles to the middle of Texas to transport crude oil to the refineries because at that time, particularly, you looked at a map of the United States and all the pipelines taking petroleum products originate out of Texas and western states in that general Rocky Mountain vicinity, there's very little on the intermountain areas west. And so, they were going to take freighters of Alaskan crude down to Los Angeles and pump it through the pipeline to the middle of Texas and refine it into gas and other products and then pump that up to the Northeast and Midwest.

KATE: And these were done Bureauwide because they covered so much territory. I mean, these were not done at local

district or State Offices?

DAVE: No, they were. For example, I was going to stay on the Kaiparowits and Ohio--had been offered to be team leader on those because of my experience on the transportation utility corridor study, but I opted not to do that because my concern was once I became a Project Manager title and that's all you did and it was interesting task to go through and people ought to go through at least one of those just for the experience. But that's not something to do for a career. But anyway, the Kaiparowits was handled out of the Utah State Office primarily and the California State Office. But they had project offices set up. For example, there was a project set up in a area close to Los Angeles like Alameda or something like that. And I did go there a couple of times to coordinate with folks and do some review work and that sort of thing.

KATE: So, was the Washington Office rendering assistance in terms of these EISs? Was that your job?

DAVE: Assistance in review because at that time, these major EISs had to go through the Department and I can't remember the acronym, but it was OEPR, Office of Environmental Project Review, I guess it was. And that had a staff of folks in the Department to review all these major agencies EISs. And I remember one particular individual that used to take a document, it would be chocked full of paper clips of places for you to review and make comments or suggested changes and all that. And there were about 4 or 5 people in the office and they were pretty tough reviewers.

KATE: Well, these were early days for EISs too, so I think everybody was learning. So, what's next?

DAVE: Okay, so then in 1976, the Bureau was making some changes and in the State Office of Division of Resources they were recognizing you to literally branch out with more

disciplines and expertise and at that time, New Mexico, Utah, and Arizona had set up within the Division of Resources Branches. One was a Branch of Resources, one was a Branch of Lands, Minerals and Recreation. And I applied and was selected for the Branch Chief in the New Mexico State Office.

KATE: Back in the southwest.

DAVE: Back in the southwest. And I was in that position.

KATE: So, was that for the lands, minerals, and...

DAVE: Recreation.

KATE: Recreation.

DAVE: Programs. That was primarily on policy, guidance, and direction, budget coordination, sort of quality control and programs and that sort of thing.

KATE: How long were you in New Mexico?

DAVE: In that job, I was there for two and a half years. And I applied for and was selected for the District Manager job in Grand Junction, Colorado.

KATE: So, at what point would you consider that you had gotten really into the management part of things? Was that back in Washington or would that have been when you came in as the Chief of the Lands and Minerals?

DAVE: Probably really to the full extent as a Branch Chief there in the State Office.

KATE: And when you went over to be the Branch Chief and later the District Manager, you had already had, obviously, a really broad-based experience in the BLM. You had done many different things. But as you went into management, kind of looking back on it, what would you say was the thing that helped you the most in becoming a manager in terms of your experience or did you get any extra training, did they send you to how to be a manager school?

DAVE: I did get supervisory training and OPM had some courses. I took two or three of those. But I think the thing that probably helped was the fact that I had moved around and worked in different jobs with a lot of different people. And, I guess, exposed to the different cultures and more as and things of that nature so that I just had a better understanding of where people were coming from, if you will. Interacted with different folks.

KATE: So, let's carry on. Let's bring you up to the Medford, coming to Medford here.

DAVE: Then from Grand Junction, when I was there, I was there four and a half years.

KATE: Before we move through too quickly, I just want to ask you a little bit about your experience at Grand Junction. What were some of the differences there?

DAVE: We had a variety of programs there. We had a large grazing program, a fairly sizeable recreation program. We were issuing permits on the Colorado River for rafting that sort of thing. We had some campgrounds, and we had just started getting into the wilderness inventory process. We had a lot of energy activity, oil and gas, coal. And there were some wildlife programs there too. One thing that was interesting, right outside the city of Grand Junction was a major escarpment called the Palisades. And on top of that was an area that was interesting because it was being considered and ultimately designated as a wild horse range.

It was about 26,000 acres and also had oil and gas leases on it and was also a Wilderness Study Area. It was interesting in trying to deal with all those uses and so forth.

KATE: Probably a lot of different interest groups and pressures and what not. So, after Colorado.

DAVE: Okay. So, then while I was at Grand Junction, the old Conservation Division of the USGS which has since become Minerals Management Service was merged into BLM. And the Bureau felt like that they wanted to not make it appear as a takeover. So, the bottom line was that Grand Junction and Casper were running neck and neck as to where they want to put the MMS manager. So, it was a matter of where I was going to move to from there. And they wanted me back in New Mexico as the Deputy State Director for Lands and Renewable Resources.

KATE: So, was that your next move back to the State Office in New Mexico?

DAVE: Right.

KATE: Okay. And that was Deputy State Director for Lands.

DAVE: And Renewable Resources.

KATE: Now, I'm sorry, I've lost track here. Was that partly to oversee the MMS or was that?

DAVE: No, what that did was it incorporated the sort of a follow up to the leasing program because they carried out the actual, on-the-ground activities for the development of lease. And we used to have, I have to stop and think of the terminology. I can't remember the term but it was on the oil and gas leases, for example, we had on-site

inspections, and the MMS or the old Conservation Division, USGS, was responsible for going out and assuring they set up their drilling activities properly on their APDs, that's the term I was trying to think of, the applications for permit to drill. And from that they had the on-sites. And they'd go out and usually the USGS folks and BLM folks would go out and look at the activity that was being proposed, but part of it would be like locating the drilling pad or set up the drilling rig making sure that the various criteria were properly done as far as the cultural surveys, any plant surveys, that sort of thing, and orientation of the mud pits so that when they had the mud slurry for their drilling, it was properly disposed of and was located in such a way that it wouldn't breach or go down into other lands and contaminate those or cause problems. And so, what that did was it brought instead of two separate entities working, it brought it together. And then one organization would be responsible for all that activity which made a lot of sense to me. Because, again, there was concern that it would appear as a takeover, they wanted to make it a true merger and so there were a few folks transferred around as a result of that.

KATE: And how long were you at the State Office?

DAVE: I was in the New Mexico State Office for roughly three years, I guess, before I transferred to the Medford District.

KATE: Okay, so that in the '80's.

DAVE: I came to Medford in June of 1986.

KATE: So, what brought you to Medford?

DAVE: Well, a couple of things. I guess one, having been a Field Manager, I enjoyed that more than working in the State Office where I had a little more control over what

was being done and how we did things. In the State Office, I was sort of in the middle there and didn't have as much, I guess, authority or control of what was done or how it was done.

KATE: Maybe not as directly seeing the products of your labor, so to speak.

DAVE: Right. And actually, setting the direction and so forth where things get done and then being responsible for things getting done. I just enjoyed working in the field office better and this job came open and I had never been to Oregon, and it sounded like an interesting area, so I moved into the position.

KATE: Now, you must have had a family at that time. Did that play in consideration in terms of your move here? Did you, were you thinking along those lines as well?

DAVE: Well, again, I guess, I wanted to get back to a field location. I had two very small children at the time, and we felt like it was a good time to move and not have too much of an adverse impact. And I think it was good for my children growing up because when we were in Santa Fe, for example, I think it was probably about 55 percent Hispanic population, so in a sense, we kind of got a flavor for how minorities felt in the Bureau. And I think it was just good to be exposed to different cultures, again. It made the kids more self-reliant and self-sufficient in dealing with different cultures and so forth.

KATE: That's definitely important.

DAVE: And there was a lot of Indian culture there too in the area, and it's neat being a kid and understanding and just being exposed to that culture and tradition.

KATE: Santa Fe will do that. I spent several years there myself. And it was almost like being in a different country. Let's talk a little bit about the job here at the Medford District. And what I really want to ask you first of all is just to give your viewpoint on what the job is and then move into looking at how things perhaps have changed over the time that you've been here. So, a few basic questions at the beginning for someone like me who is ignorant of all of this. How does the District Manager position from anywhere fit into the BLM organization? What would be the job description of a District Manager?

DAVE: Let me start by saying that the Bureau of Land Management is under the Secretary of the Interior as is, for example, the Forest Service under the Department of Agriculture. So, the BLM boss, the Director, reports to the Secretary and then, in turn, the Director has several State Directors report to him or her. And then beneath the State Directors, you have District Managers and then Area Managers. And all these folks are considered line managers that have the ability or authority to do certain things as far as carrying out the program responsibilities of the Bureau. And so, in a sense, you have the Secretary, the Director, the State Director, and the DMs and Area Managers in that sequence of line authority.

KATE: And what does the District Manager do? You're a manager of a District. What would be your job description, so to speak?

DAVE: Well, because there's several different parts, I'm going to refer back to the position description. Basically responsible for planning policies and programs of the Department in the management of natural resources for the public lands in the Medford District. And then the programs can be adjusted as necessary to meet local conditions but stay within the parameters of the existing policy and regulations and laws.

KATE: That sounds like a very significant phrase. That's

presumably where you, as District Manager, get the ability to operate here on-the-ground with some latitude and some authority.

DAVE: Correct. And, again, that was one of things that I enjoyed being a field manager. As part of that, the position serves as a principal advisor to the State Director on policies and programs pertinent to the Medford District and as such provides feedback to the State Director on a timely basis as problems and issues arise that might touch upon policy determinations. And also, as a member of the State Director's executive committee or the State Management Group, if you will, participates in the policy making processes on matters of Statewide significance. In other words, we work together on the issues that have impact Statewide or maybe in some cases western Oregon-wide so part of it was working with other line managers or the District Managers in the process. And then certainly communicating and interpreting BLM departmental policies to the Area Managers and the Division Chiefs, and other key subordinates in the District. And then part of the process, too, would be to develop required District policies and procedures to assure that objectives were fully met in the District and what that would then entail, in some cases, taking national and state policy and then making it applicable to the District level.

KATE: So, there again that sounds like one of those areas where the District Manager is going to have a lot of influence.

DAVE: A fair amount anyway because obviously what you have to do is within the parameters or sideboards of national policy and correction. But, on the other hand, if you can envision that one size doesn't necessarily fit all, that you had some flexibility to make it fit the local situation too where it's appropriate. And then certainly part of it would be to oversee or monitor implementation of these program objectives to evaluate the timeliness, adequacy, and effectiveness of the mission accomplishments. And part of it would be responsible for the overall budget,

personnel direction, organizational direction. And part of it would be seeing that the employees get or have the needed resources and equipment to try to help carry out their job, of course, within budget parameters and constraints. And also, part of that would be to assure that owners and sectors of the public have the opportunity to review and provide timely input into plans and management direction. And part of it is maintaining a meaningful contact with various interest groups such as industry and environmental public organizations and then brokered local governments and individuals. A key part of it too being able to make sure the District policies and programs would comply with the equal employment opportunity principles and objectives. And also, a key part of that is the outside communication with different folks. I think a real major part is establishing and maintaining a good repartee and working relationship with the various entities, particularly the Congressional representatives. We have three local offices here or field representatives for two of the Senators and one of the State Congressional representatives that are working.

KATE: This is maybe jumping ahead a little bit, but can you tell me what would be the major groups today that you deal with. We'll get into how maybe things have changed, but you mentioned industry, you mentioned Congressional representatives, you mentioned, I think, environmental groups. Would you kind of see those as the major categories or would you add local governments, I guess?

DAVE: Well, I don't think the organizational groups have changed that much. We probably have increased the emphasis of working with those folks more closely. I guess you have to go back and sort of review the history a little bit in that you go back and probably 40 years ago, in the O&C Oregon-California area of western Oregon. And the purpose there, of course, was to develop this area as far as settlement and economic growth. And so, at that point in time, about the only one that was concerned or interested in what the Bureau did was the Oregon counties because of the revenues they got from the timber sale receipts. And then probably 30 years ago, then the state was a little

more involved and interested, but those were the primary constituents or people of interest in what we did. Then as you get closer to the current time, obviously, we had this influx in this area of outside people, if you will, or non-residents I should say, not native to the area. And with that, people brought their own philosophies, interests, needs, and demands. And so, therefore, I guess the point I was getting at is that the public lands and the resources became a lot more visible, and people became more aware of those lands and resources. And probably the real major challenge of this District, as well as other western Oregon Districts, is the checkerboard land in that we didn't have the luck, if you will, of solid block lands like the Forest Service did or the public domain districts of BLM. They tend to have more solid blocks of land and as part of the process, we had more neighbors who were adjacent to property owners to our tracts. And particularly in the rural valleys where with the sub-Mediterranean climate we have in this area and the quality of life people like and are seeking to enjoy then when you have measured activities, there have been more and more concerns over the years about the impacts of those activities. And people have a lot of different things they bring up that they don't want us to impact their view sheds, or they feel like we're impacting their property values. So, it makes it very challenging and complex to try to carry out the Bureau's mission which is to produce some resources off the public lands. In some cases, commodity production as far as timber, wood products, or minerals. And then addressing to the extent possible the public's interests and desires.

KATE: Getting back and I want to follow up just a little on this, but getting back to the job, itself, and what a District Manager does. I think you covered the organizational stuff quite well. In terms of issues, in terms of what you do, what would you consider our internal issues that a District Manager would most likely be involved in? I mean, we've got four resource areas, each with their own managers, so at what point do you become involved in the internal business of BLM. You're obviously dealing with outside people, would they come to you rather than an area manager or how do we figure that one out?

DAVE: Well, of course, part of it is to assure that we're getting consistent applications of our policies and procedures and to provide customer service on an even basis, if you will, and the public is treated equal, fairly. Part of it also involves a lot of dealing with their internal customers or employees in dealing with issues, concerns, and complaints in some cases. So, there's a lot of external coordination, a lot of internal coordination, oversight too to assure we're complying with appropriate policies, procedures, and carrying out our mandates and mission within our budgetary requirements. Making sure we don't overspend or we're spending properly as allocated and things of that nature.

KATE: How do you go about coordinating between the different resource areas? Do you see them as different? I mean, how do you manage to handle that?

DAVE: Well, of course, in this District, it is very diverse, and you look at the standpoint of you go from 18 inches of precipitation on the east side and over 90 inches on the west side, so the vegetation and geographic areas are different. So, you can't, I guess, take a paintbrush, and paint everything on a broad perspective. You have to look at the differences and work with those differences while again staying within the requirements and mandates. We have different publics in those areas, too. So, I guess, for the most part, the Area Managers have delegated authority to carry out their programs. And then it's my responsibility to make sure that they're doing it according to the annual work plans and commitments. But then if issues become sensitive or it looks like there are inconsistencies, then I'll get involved. And part of that is meeting with the managers periodically and discussing issues or concerns. Also looking at needs, if you will, organizational needs, to try to address those to the extent that we can within the budgets and parameters.

KATE: Do you have, I'm sure you do, have guidelines for yourself in terms of how you manage these various differences in order to maintain a certain amount of

consistency? I don't know if you can spell those out, it may just be something that you do.

DAVE: Well, I'm not quite sure how to address that question, Kate. But I guess I've always tried to let people in the organization know where I'm coming from, what I expect, practice open door policy, try to be firm but fair. This is the way we're going to do things but try to understand, you know, again people's interests, desires, and needs. So, I guess those would be sort of the guiding principles I've tried to implement in my tenure here at least.

KATE: What about the external issues? I know that you need to deal with the State Office, you need to deal with the different publics, I know that you're on various committees, interagency committees. Can you give kind of a sketch of what you as District Manager need to do that is not right here inside the Medford District?

DAVE: Well, of course, a lot of my travels involve working with the State Management Team, again in trying to analyze, carry out existing policy, but also kind of look ahead as to where we should be going as an organizational entity. And I would certainly say that it applies to the District too. Not just carrying the District workload but kind of foreseeing where we should be going in aiming the workforce and policy in that direction. With the completion of the Northwest Forest

TAPE ENDED.

DAVE: Yeah, and set up these professional Advisory Committees which is made up of a very diverse cross section of the local populace, if you will. That particular committee was comprised of roughly 28 individuals from industry, environmental, governmental, etc. So, we'd have meetings of those every 6 weeks.

KATE: Do you still meet every 6 weeks? This is an ongoing?

DAVE: Yes.

KATE: This is just part of what you do?

DAVE: Right.

KATE: Okay.

DAVE: Then as a part of that, we usually follow up immediately from those meetings with our provincial Interagency Executive Committee meetings which is basically local Field Managers or Agency Heads getting together again looking at things on more of a geographic area or provincial basis. And, of course, the provinces were set up the Forest Plan.

KATE: Right. And we are in the

DAVE: Southwestern Province. I think that's been beneficial from the standpoint that in the past we tended to look at in a sense of micromanagement of our individual local sites rather than looking at the broad landscape basin, subbasin aspects and the interrelationships, interdependencies of resource activities in different publics and so forth. So, that takes quite a bit of time and preparation in carrying out agendas, meeting with a group such as the Southern Oregon Timber Industry Association usually at least once a year we try to get together with their, what we call the Operations Committee.

KATE: I'm sorry, is this part of the provincial meeting that the meeting is with?

DAVE: No, this another local group. Certainly meeting with different publics and organizations out on the ground such as the environmental groups, neighborhood groups.

KATE: What triggers a meeting? Is it usually a request from somebody else or does somebody here initiate, gee I think we better...

DAVE: It can be a combination of both because in looking at some of our proposed actions, certain areas get more involved with those public meetings and tours than I, but occasionally it's beneficial to go out and participate in those. In some cases, when requested, I attend those too from the both internal and outside interests. And then part of that too is spending time just cooperating and coordinating with a congressional office, the county commissioners, in explaining our programs and projects, giving a heads up on potentially sensitive issues and certainly responding to inquiries from them about activities we're doing and the direction we're going and that sort of thing.

KATE: What's the REO? Are you a part of that?

DAVE: No, the Regional Ecosystem Office was set up as basically sort of staff to the Regional Interagency Executive Committee or the true agency heads like the State Director or the Regional Forester, the head of the Park Service in this geographic area and so forth. They work as staff to the Regional Execs.

KATE: Okay. So, your main involvement through the Forest Plan and the sort of reconfiguring of relationships that that brought about is through these provincial teams?

DAVE: Primarily, we--I say we, myself, the Regional Interagency execs a lot of times will interact with the REO Office on proposals such as the section reserve plans,

issues involving implementation of the Forest Plan or surveying and managing for species, things of that nature. But not as much as the provincial level groups, if you will.

KATE: That's really kind of the working groups, the provincial level.

DAVE: Right and occasionally we'd interact with the State government as far as the Governor's Task Forces or Department of Forestry of the Department of Fish and Wildlife and that sort of thing.

KATE: Right. I want to sort of ask you a little bit, you know, what can a District Manager really do? What can you as a District Manager of the Medford District really do? You've got the Bureau that stretches up above you, the state, the federal policies, and then you've got the Area Managers that are underneath your direction. And how much latitude do you have to really make things happen or control things here? I guess, coming into the BLM as I did, I always heard about the Forest Supervisor or the District Manager, kind of the big boss out there. And when people are unhappy with what's going on, they want to make this guy do what they want. And to what extent do you have influence and control authority?

DAVE: Well, there is some flexibility, but still, we have to stay within the existing laws, regulations, and policies. Sometimes that does constrain what we can do or how we do it. But we can work within some parameters or flexibilities of those to do things that are more applicable to the local geographic area, if you will. But, you know, we have influence as far as we developed our land use plans and what we proposed to do and carried those out. And once those then are approved by the State Director, then, of course, we adhere to those. We have some flexibilities in developing them as to how we manage the local public lands. But, in some cases, we don't have the flexibility where some of the public say we just don't want

you to put in any trees, well, that's part of the area we've identified in our plans for product production. So, from that standpoint, we don't have the flexibility of not doing anything but how we do it. But we have some flexibility on how we carry it out.

KATE: For example, could you just cancel timber sales if they were being protested? And if so, on what grounds?

DAVE: Well, we might look at it and say we would cancel at this point in time, but it was in an area that we had identified for timber production. Then at some point in time we'd go back in and either reestablish and resurrect that particular timber sale. We might modify it and have a different sale. But if it appeared that we had not properly analyzed and addressed some issues, then certainly would be in our interest to cancel or reschedule or postpone that particular sale. And give us some time to go back and look at those issues. But just because a group of folks didn't want us to harvest timber in the area that we had identified for in our plan period, no I don't have any flexibility. And that's what we tried to go out and explain to people, you know, this is a timber production area and how we go about it, we'll try to work with you and incorporate things that you'd be interested in, so forth, to the extent we can.

KATE: So what you're saying, essentially, is that you can't obviously just cancel something but your arena of flexibility is in the how it's done?

DAVE: Correct. And of course, there's a lot of vague interpretation by the public of how the law should be carried out. And so there's some, I guess, gray areas, if you will, as far as how they're interpreted. But then again one of the things that the District Manager does when they enter or take on the offices, they're basically sworn in to uphold the laws and the Constitution of the United States. And it says we will produce timber resources for the use of the general public. Then that's part of our

responsibilities and commitments too. And just because a local group says we don't want to have you impact on our landscape and so forth, that just isn't going to cut it. So, that's what makes some of the decisions tough and controversial of not so much of what we do but how we do it. Because in some cases, we don't have any choice on what we do. Again, I guess I go back to trying to make sure we comply with the, again, laws, policies, and regulations but do it in a fair and consistent manner so that we're taking people's concerns into consideration and doing the same for and to everybody, I guess, if you want to call it that. And applying these policies and principles.

KATE: Can you think of an example of some project whether it's a timber sale or a right-of-way or one of the things that we do here on the District, whether your decision has really made a difference in terms of what's happened on the ground? Either because you've had the public come in and talk to you or an issue has arisen? Or the buy backs or some similar.

DAVE: Well, of course, the buy backs were done by Congress, so we were responsible for carrying out Congress' direction. The same thing on, you know, salvage sales and things of that nature. But I guess one example I can think of where one of the Resource Areas was trying to establish some fire breaks as part of the ecosystem management in the Northwest Forest Plan. There were some folks both externally and internally wanting to not put a fire break on this one ridge because of some concerns about solving their habitat. And to me it appeared that, you know, part of the job responsibility is for multiple use management not just single resource management, if you will. Because I felt it was important to connect the rest of that fire line with this one particular area. It was more important to do that and have some impacts than to not do that and potentially have greater impacts for that program or species in the long-term by not doing that. So, again you have to look at it on a broad basis, broad skill basis, and impact with several different issues and resources. In some cases, you'll have staff specialists that are looking

at things, and, you know, from their perspective, they're supposed to look at things from their particular discipline. They also have to recognize that managers have to look at several issues and impacts and, again, as a management team, make some decisions that may not always go in their favor but in the realm of things, it has to be done in a bigger picture.

KATE: That actually answers that question, and it also answers, to a certain extent, a question that I was going to ask later on which is that in terms of the manager's responsibility to weigh many different things and then come up with a decision. What would be some of the guidelines that you bring to that decision making process? And you just mentioned that using multiple use, for example, is.

DAVE: Well, again, you know, we have to look at the biological, the economical, and the political aspects. One of the things is criteria in the O&C Act for community stability. And partly that is to try to keep a sustained flow of wood products into the local businesses to help maintain that stability. And we made some changes, particularly in the Northwest Forest Plan, we reduced the amount, but at least our intent is to keep the amount we have flowing on a sustainable period over time so that businesses can predict and forecast and plan for their particular individual endeavors in business too. That's very important.

KATE: So that's part of the economic considerations?

DAVE: Right.

KATE: You want to take a little break here for a minute or are you okay to carry on?

DAVE: I'm okay. But some issues, you know, did get very sensitive or controversial because you have some groups

that feel very strongly about their particular discipline or program, if you will, and tend sometimes not to look at impacts or other needs and issues and so, therefore, it gets to be controversial and becomes political as far as people not getting their way. And I guess that's one of things that makes the job tough is that you do have to look at bouncing a lot of different issues and values and come up with the best decision you think you can under the circumstances with information you have. I learned long ago, you're never going to please a hundred percent of the public. It's impossible nor would I try to but a lot of times, I guess, I go back to the old saying, well, if you've got both sides unhappy, you must be doing your job.

KATE: Right. It sounds to me that in a sense what you're saying, what you said a little bit earlier about being fair and being firm in terms of how you go about implementing what you do and in terms of needing to balance the many issues that consensus might be nice but it's not necessarily your goal. On the other hand, you want there to be an understanding, I don't want to put words in your mouth, from people who deal with you that they're going to get a consistent policy that they can trust but it's going to be there.

DAVE: I think that's fair. And, again, as long as we're consistent on how we approach these things, so if one part of the District would do the same thing as another part in addressing that particular direction or program. So, we're not perceived or, in fact, playing favorites to individuals or groups or whatever. But, again, it's our responsibility to properly carry out the requirements of our mandates and the laws and policies and regulations.

KATE: I want to get a little bit of a sense of how you spend your time as a District Manager. And I'm sure this has changed as you've been here over the course of more than a decade. But to what extent is your time taken up by internal issues versus, perhaps, external issues? What would be the major arenas that seem to just keep you really busy? Would it be personnel, would it be dealing with the

resource areas, or public involvement?

DAVE: Well, of course, how I spend my time varies. Every day certainly isn't the same. I spend a lot more time on internal issues than I anticipated I ever would on this job because of the large size of the workforce, the diversity of disciplines, and people. Frankly, western Oregon has a very different culture than the rest of the Bureau, I think. And a lot of that is people have been in place for a long, long time; some of them all of their career, in fact. Whereas in other parts of the Bureau, people tend to move around more, it's just part of the culture of change, if you will. Internal, a lot of it is spent on personnel issues and complaints. Again, at times, a high percentage is in coordination with the areas about things they are doing on projects and programs. Certainly, a fair amount is external coordination. Again, that might be dealing with the mining claim one day and the same day, dealing with the congressional level folks, county commissioners, timber industry folks, and internal employees. So, it's quite variable across the board. And unfortunately, a lot of my time is spent on paperwork, too, which is a necessary evil, I guess, to the job. It's one of the things I least enjoy doing, but it's certainly important and necessary to review incoming policies and make sure that directions are out for consistent application, signing of ongoing correspondence that has to be signed by myself versus delegate to others. Just a whole gamut of things that occur in a day's time.

KATE: Do you spend a lot of time in committee meetings? You mentioned some of the external committees. Is this a time grabber for you?

DAVE: Yeah, unfortunately, it seems like, you know, BLM has been called the Bureau of Lots of Meetings and it's probably correct in that we do have lots of meetings. Of course, part of it is necessary and important for planning and evaluating and so forth and direction setting, but I guess looking back over the histories, I certainly had visions of spending more time out in the field than I did

as my career went on. I spent less and less time in the field unfortunately.

KATE: I'd like to just shift into a little bit of your experience of being here at the BLM over the last, since 1986 and ask you what it was like when you came on and what's happened over the last 11 years, and how it's changed. So, maybe starting off with what was the Medford District like when you came, something about the workforce or maybe the main business that you had to attend to or the major issues?

DAVE: Well, I'll start off by saying I was the first non O&C manager in western Oregon and that was a cultural change probably for myself as well as the workforce.

KATE: Back up just a little bit. When you say you were a non O&C manager that means?

DAVE: I had to spend most of my career coming up through the ranks here in western Oregon.

KATE: Yeah. Dealing with what are specifically O&C issues...

DAVE: Well, of course, apparently part of that was producing timber sales.

KATE: Timber was the big one, that was the big difference.

DAVE: Right. And, for example, when I first came to the District, our annual sale quantity was 213 million board feet a year. The first year I was here, we produced 350 million board feet with a lot of buy back timber that.

KATE: I didn't catch that. Your annual sales quantity when you first came was pretty much on the way out by the time I got here. It was 13 million?

DAVE: 213 million.

KATE: 213 million, okay.

DAVE: The first year I was here basically we produced 350 million because part of it was reoffering some of the buyback sales of, you know, the period before I got here which a lot of the industry paid high prices for sales, and the market really dropped out so Congress passed a law to have the government buy back some of those and then take them and reoffer them. The first year was a real cruncher as far as people really working hard to get the additional volume back up on the market. There were an awful lot of protests and appeals from particularly the environmental side. I had been told and I don't know anything that refutes that but when I got here, Medford District was producing about 25 percent of the Interior Board of Line Appeals workload.

KATE: That must have been something to walk into. Had you dealt with this type of issue before? I know you had dealt with timber, but in your previous job as District Manager, have you been involved in a lot of these types of controversies?

DAVE: There were a few protests and things of that nature. And certainly people question or challenge the way we did business, but nothing to the extent of this as far as the level of intensity. And I looked at the District, and we got roughly 160 thousand acres of land that we administer which by just land acre size is not that big in comparison to some of the Districts of the Bureau but it's a lot more intense and concentrated as far as the kinds of resources, intensity of management, and public feeling, if you will. Plus the significant impact of rural interface where people

are moving out into the woods and living right next to our lands and concern about how we deal with those. So, I guess that was the initial thing I walked into. And it was more of a production line, assembly line thing that timber sales produced.

KATE: That was really the major business of BLM at the point that you entered in and is tied obviously to some of the major issues that you faced.

DAVE: Primarily, we, of course, had the growth of the wild scenic river that was in place at the time and that's been one that has got controversial a couple of times since I've been here. But we've held firm on that as far as what we thought was an equitable allocation of commercial versus private use.

KATE: So, I'm sorry, what was the source of controversy here? Uses of the river or the?

DAVE: Well, the private sector, particularly, felt that they should have more than 50 percent of the use of the river.

KATE: You mean private rafters?

DAVE: Right. Versus commercial businesses where people, the commercial folks would buy an opportunity to go on the river, if you will.

KATE: So, we're talking about regulating the use of who gets to float, fish, whatever.

DAVE: The use and how many because over the years, we've felt like at least 120 people per day going down through the river quarter was a reasonable balance and allocation. Some people would like to have an increase and have more people going in the river. And our concern is that people would lose some of the wilderness setting, if you will, or the wild experience. And we've gone to the public and asked them, for the most part, the majority of the people have agreed that we shouldn't increase the allocation. That's something that might change over time, but we've had different comments and feedback from people who rafted over different parts of the country and said, you know, if I want to go to Coleman or have a lot traffic, so I'll go to Coney Island versus the ability to go on the river like the Rogue and they have some regional amount of solitude and lack of large crowds and groups and things like that. So, that's been controversial at times. And I remember one time in my early tenure here, I went to a meeting of guides and fitters up in Eugene and caught a lot of flak for the fact, you know, they felt like they should have more business on the river and so forth because of their incomes. But I think we've been able to persevere on that and still maintain a reasonable and fair use of the resource and not over impact it. So, there's been that. Apparently, it was timber production and one of the issues that had really risen to a head before I got here and, of course, continued over, was the use of herbicides. And there was legal action taken that shut us down prior to my coming here, and we were involved with assisting and developing the EIS on that, environmental impact statement. And we still have never been fully cleared in the 11 and half years that I have been here to go back and be able to use some level of herbicides. We have been cleared on noxious weed control, which is certainly a lot smaller program, if you will. But even that is still very controversial because I've had some people complain about us proposing to spray 10 acres, you know, over White Hair. They feel like we're poisoning the water.

KATE: Get back to getting an idea what the District itself was like. Did you have a large workforce when you?

DAVE: There were 280 permanent employees when I got here, and through cutbacks and personnel ceiling, we've gone down to our present ceiling of about 247.

KATE: And what was the constituency, was it mostly foresters and timber people? Have you seen a big change? Or how would you characterize the workforce at that time?

DAVE: Well, I wouldn't say the constituency was that. We've had both a strong environmental interest as well as the timber side or the industry side. And that's been brought about by a lot of people from California and other states. And we seem to get the brunt of it because we're closer to the California border, coming up I-5 and seeing the area and wanting to move in and establish residence here. And bringing in their individual values and philosophies and so forth. But I think the change that I have seen over the years is our willingness to try to work more with the public and address their concerns, interests to the extent we can, again, with the existing, within existing parameters and laws and regulations. I think we've ameliorated some of the differences. There's still a lot of people who don't like what we're doing or think we're cutting too much still even though the ASQ now's dropped down to 57 million board feet in the Northwest Forest Plan. But I think part of that is I've made it a practice to delegate more responsibility out to the Area Managers and the ability to take more risks in working with the publics and trying, again, to meet our objective but still addressing and involving the public's concerns and issues.

KATE: So, you see this decentralization a little bit of decision making as something that has really helped in terms of the involvement of the public?

DAVE: Well, I think, you know, we've paid more attention or involved in their ideas more than we had in the past. In the past, we're like we're going to cut timber and that's the bottom line. We'll try to address your concerns

a little bit but we, well I know we didn't take under consideration then as much as we do now. And I think over time too, you've seen a change in some of the local county commissioners. Whereas in the past, you had some that were very much adamant about maintaining the high level of the forest harvest and so forth because, you know, it was revenues to the counties. But some of them have come in a little bit more moderate as far as other resource values and considerations too. But I know one of the managers came in, and we had a little bit of a brouhaha, if you will, where one of the O&C officials felt like that some of our new managers needed to be trained in the history of the O&C. This individual was more like a sociologist taking the trees to market without cutting around the forest, well, they'd be happy. So, we had a bit of a conflict on that, but I certainly support what the individual was doing. I think it's proved to be better in the long run and will give the integrity back to the public. That's been a major impact over the years, too, we have lost integrity to the public as an agency because people are unhappy with the way we approach things. People are still unhappy with the forest plans, in some cases, because, obviously, some people like to see more timber cut, some still like to see less cut. But I think we're showing that we're sincere and able to carry out the plan as it was prescribed and having some flexibility to adapt.

KATE: I want to get back and just ask, in terms of personnel when you came on, it seems to me that even the little bit of time that I've been here that I've seen, and I may just be imagining this that more women and more minorities coming into the Medford District Office just even in the last 5 years. Is that something you've noticed over the course of time, or you've been instrumental in?

DAVE: Definitely. Certainly, there's been a concerted effort, if you will, to do just that. That's correct. When I got here, we had very few women in the workforce. We've increased that a little bit over my period of time here. And I think, certainly, the philosophy of some of the folks has changed a little bit and moderated because, you know, when I got here, it was the old O&C foresters and

forestry was king, and we have changed that to where some of the programs have more visibility and stature, I believe. We've got a better recognition of the interrelationships, interdependencies of those various disciplines and programs.

KATE: What programs do you think have gotten a little bit more visible in the last 10 years?

DAVE: Certainly, wildlife has. Recreation. I think we've given a little more credence to some of the soils and hydrologic aspects. I guess the best way I can kind of describe that is in the past, we had timber sales planned where the foresters or silviculturists were just going to do wildlife, recreation, so forth. Can you live with that? Now it's what do you need for your program and how can we try to blend them all together to meet all the needs as much as possible in the process. I think more like soils, for example, is trying to keep out of hazardous areas in the past. Whereas now is looking more at the productivity and other things as well as the hazards of how we carry out our management directions.

KATE: What are some of the major policy changes that you've seen in the last 10 years? You've talked a little bit about the Forest Plan, and I guess that's tied to ecosystem management, so, would you see that as the major policy shift or have there been others along the way?

DAVE: Well, probably the major factor in policy shifts because certainly, there's been more protection of the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet other habitat dependent species in looking at the ecosystem base management whereas, again, it was in the past, it was here is the ASQ level for production and you went out and drew a boundary, clear cut it, and that was it. You know, you looked more at the habitat needs of various species with all of these silvicultural aspects, biological aspects, leaning more towards old growth characteristics or timber stands.

KATE: And, I think, based on what you've just said in terms of other programs having higher visibility and different shifts and how people look at a situation in terms of how they maybe ask what is it we need to do to get this done. Would you say the ecosystem management has really given you a new paradigm in terms of basic assumptions and philosophies of land management? Or do you see it more as a strengthening, perhaps, of past environmental.

DAVE: I guess I would say more of strengthening, KATE, in that frankly one of the things that concerned me when I got here was the practice of clear cutting we had where they used the terminology of slash, trash, and burn. Some of the managers and I learned over time that in some cases, you could save a lot of natural reproduction and, I guess, cash in on the investment that you have of some growing time and species rather than having to go out and just cut everything down and burn it and start from scratch with reforestation. You save, again, some years of growing time, of getting stands back quicker, less impact on the site as far as broadcast burning which takes away some of the nutrients in some cases and that sort of thing. And in looking at some of the habitat needs and some of the visual aspects but more from the biological cultural standpoint of leaving certain trees or number of trees and so forth to address some of the factors that in the past I don't think were given as much consideration.

KATE: Well, when you came on, you did not come on with a background in timber, so did it take you a while to need to learn this, to learn about silviculture or had you had?

DAVE: Well, certainly I had the training. We did do some small amount of harvesting in places I've been before. But I guess the major thing was looking at management and direction because there were existing skills to do the stuff, and so from that perspective, we just had to give them the direction of where we wanted to go and carry it out. So, I don't think it was critical to have the technical skills as much as the management and people

skills and the coordination. I think that was part of the issue too when, you know, there were some significant changes taking place before I got here as well as when I got here from the standpoint of one of the State Directors in place as I came on board, in fact, helped bring me into this job was that western Oregon was a lot like other parts of the Bureau where you took technical specialists because they were good technical people and moved them into management jobs. And, in many cases, frankly, didn't have very good people skills. And, again, I'm not faulting folks, it's just the way the Bureau did things for many years and finally realized that there's more to management than just having good technical skills. Certainly, it's important to know a little bit about the technical aspects, but that's what you have specialists for. And then give them the direction and seek information that you need to help make those decisions with. I think the Bureau's made real advancements there as far as getting people trained, more and more people involved in learning and applying the people skills, the communication skills, and things like that rather than just being a good technician.

KATE: That's a change that I think I've seen even in just the few years that I've been here. Has the scope of your job changed over the last, over the decade? I think you said that you didn't get out in the field as much and that you ended up spending more time really with internal issues than you thought you would. Was that true right from the beginning or?

DAVE: Yeah, pretty much so.

KATE: Big District and lots of people?

DAVE: Well, when you're involved with responding to protests and appeals and complaints and things like that, there's much interest and attention focused on what we do and how we do it, I guess. And it requires a lot of coordination, collaboration. It's made it difficult to do. Things I envisioned I would be doing, at least, and, you

know in part, I guess I'll have to accept part of the blame too that I haven't made more time to get out and get in the field too. There's just so much going on unless you specifically say I'm going to set aside a couple of days or a day here and it doesn't happen because you're consumed by the other demands and requirements.

KATE: In terms of the major issues you've had to face, certainly from the outside timber and environment are the big ones. And we've already covered some of that ground. You talked about how the timber goals have changed. How would you characterize current timber policies compared to how you came in. You said that a little bit, but maybe just to hit that one more time.

DAVE: Well, of course, the major impact of that has resulted from the Northwest Forest Plan which because of the different land use allocations or land allocations, for example, like successful reserves were very constrained. What we could do was go in there and manage timber, if you will, but what we do have to do is be either zero impact or beneficial to habitat directions or plans for old growth dependent species, so that changes the timber aspects there. Certainly, in the riparian buffers and the tier 1 and 2 watersheds, each having their own individual requirements and demands, if you will, that impacts that amount and kind of timber production that you wind up with. So, in a sense, it's gone from primarily looking at the objective of extracting timber or making it available for harvest to other resource needs and interests.

KATE: And that really is part of how have environmental issues changed as well in the sense, how the environmental policies change and implementation of these policies.

DAVE: Well, you know, it's interesting looking back. That has happened for a lot of different reasons. One, I think, we've learned more of what the needs are from a scientific basis. There's been a lot of political aspects as far as the environment is concerned about harvesting timber.

Again, it goes back to what I consider the travails, the political, the economic and biological aspects and learn certainly more in all those areas that we've had a lot more influence in all those areas. I guess part of the field of obligation is the professional land manager to address some of the economic needs for local communities and on the one hand, making commodities available to the American public to use and enjoy. And then as intertwined with the social and political aspects of it.

KATE: And biological issues added. As part of the timber environment stuff and you've already mentioned this a little bit in general terms, how was your own experience of dealing with the public or all the various publics changed over time or has it?

DAVE: Well, again, I think we've done a better job of trying to address the public involvement or interest. On the other hand, you probably have some people who say that we still aren't listening to them because they've got, you know, their specific biases or interests they want that in some cases, is inconsistent with others. So, you have a lot of these individual or special interests that want to have things all their way. And when you have as many as you do, obviously it's impossible to give everybody all they want. And I guess another aspect of that is the knowledge and information and understanding about natural resource management versus individual's personal views and biases and in some cases, you have people that are fed incorrect information and they believe or accept that for lack of knowledge of any different.

KATE: When you talk about knowledge, you're talking specifically about our own well developed scientific understanding of how the natural world works?

DAVE: Well, I guess what I was getting at is that I think you have some people who are doing an injustice to the American public when they put out incorrect information.

Certainly, all parties do it to a certain extent, but I guess I've zeroed in on some of the environmental community whether their twisting or misrepresenting information and saying, you know, this is totally bad when it's not as bad as it ought to be. And people that don't understand that or haven't been exposed to it except at face value and start getting a bias because they're not informed or improperly informed kind of a thing or educated. And, I guess, part of it would be, you know, people growing up in large cities versus people growing up in rural areas that have a better day-to-day understanding and knowledge of what goes on in biological and natural systems and agricultural kind of things. Just like, you know, people want meat at the table, but they don't want to see these poor critters killed kind of a thing. Or a situation or experience I experienced when I was back in Washington when, I think it was about 1974 when they had the oil and gas embargo, and people drove up to the gas pumps fully expecting they had a right to get gasoline, that it ought to be there. And without understanding is where it comes from and all the intricacies that are involved with that. And I guess that's what I see that some people ply on the ignorance or malleability of people to accept incorrect or uninformed information.

KATE: That brings up another issue which is something that I'm concerned about which is to what extent do you feel the Medford District can help educate the public and if so, how?

DAVE: Well, it's a large task in that, unfortunately, I think we're more constrained from doing as good a job as we should because in some cases, policies and other cases, it's just resources for informing people. One of the ways I think we're having some positive impact is for the employees getting involved with schools and, you know, field tours, things like that, as well as going out on
TAPE ENDED.

KATE: Being on the District a lot of interest in the part of certain individuals and I think in the Resource Areas, I've seen more concerted efforts to become very involved. For example, out in the town of Butte Falls, I think, they've got a community coordinator who just seems to spend a lot of time out there. Are there other sort of District initiatives I'm not really aware of that might fall under that for you?

DAVE: Well, of course, you know, we've got Dale Jonston working with some of the schools on showing the way the salmon makes through the **life cycle (?)** kind of thing. There are different endeavors. I know Dale is working with some of the school folks up in their area. The problem is, though, that people are trying to carry out their regular duties plus taking on some additional duties that many times they don't have the time to do it, so you're spending personal time or are taking away from regular duties, so it's a pull and tug there. But, you know, we've set up these speakers bureaus in the past where employees would be, you know, range people would talk about the range program, etc., but the problem is and I understand it is that people are so darn busy in carrying out their regular job, and they're saying I don't want to do the other because I don't have time to properly prepare, and if I'm not properly prepared, I don't want to do it kind of a thing. So, it's sort of catch 22 in some cases.

KATE: Do you see that the workload for most employees has shifted over the 10 years? My impression is that people are really busy. Maybe that's always been the case.

DAVE: Well, people have always been busy. It's a different kind of workload or how they're kept busy in that one of the things we tried to point out when we produced our Draft Resource Management Plan, which was more ecosystem based management, it's more labor intensive. And I think it was like 25 percent more to let ecosystem base management. We never got the resources, both people and funding, to address that. So, that's why people are a lot

busier, and we have to go through so many more steps and hoops to get something done. You know, with all the new surveys we're doing and spending more time with the publics, field tours, and meetings and stuff to educate and listen and inform, etc. So, I think people have always been very busy in this District. It's just the way they're busy and the kind of work they're doing has changed and certainly on producing timber sales, in the past, like I say, you went out and you posted the boundary and 100 percent cruised everything inside and that was it. Well, now you have to go out and mark individual trees and do a lot more inventories and considerations and analyses and going out on field trips with people to show them what we're talking about and give us an idea what it should look like, etc.

KATE: We talked about some of the policy changes and, to a certain extent, how they've been implemented. Do you think the goals of these policies are being realized? You've seen some changes. Are they really changes, I guess, more than in just shifts and workload or whatever?

DAVE: Well, I think there are changes because, again, I go back to probably the major overall significant policy change was the Forest Plan, and they were doing business differently than we did in the past. And so, I think they've definitely changed. I think some people are, speaking in turn, some people are eager for change, some people are reluctant to make the changes. It depends on individuals and their perspective and philosophy. I think, in some cases, folks who spent most of their career in the old O&C days are having a tougher time than some of the newer ones. And yet there are some that are long-time employees that are flexible and progressive enough they can make the change, and I've kind of struggled at times with why some people are so reluctant because to me, in some cases, it gives a better opportunity to really utilize their professional training with new challenges and opportunities. So, it's certainly been a change, I think.

KATE: How have you viewed the Forest Plan? Is it

something that you've welcomed, or do you think it's more work?

DAVE: Well, I think I certainly agree with the general concept and direction because we were headed that way with our Draft Resource Management Plan that made a major change from past land use plans. I guess my concern is maybe it's gone too far.

KATE: Gone too far in what direction?

DAVE: Well, a lot of the scientific theories and so forth without verification. To me, it's a grand experiment. And it's supposed to be an adaptive Management Plan but my concern is that to make the adaptation is going to be a lot more time consuming and costly than what it should be because we have to prove ourselves. I think the pendulum has swung from one extreme to the other. And some of the scientific community are saying well, we need to go way over here because in a sense, we can't trust managers to do the right thing and so a little bit is good enough, a lot more is even better. And I think it should have been more towards the middle. And I'm hopeful that, you know, we can truly make changes as we carry out some of the management direction and learn from that. And if we need to make changes, make the changes in the right direction.

KATE: When you say the pendulum should have been maybe more in the middle, the middle between scientific over here and public here or middle. How are we defining the middle?

DAVE: Well, to me the middle is that we've constrained the management in a lot of areas for, I think, commodity production more than we needed to. When we have taken western Oregon as a whole and reduced it down to 17 percent of the land area for basic commodity production, I think that's gone too far. I guess I, the reason I say.

KATE: Commodities here, are we talking specifically timber or are we talking other things?

DAVE: Extracting commodities, mining, timber. I guess those are the primary ones. But I'm, I guess, from my personal philosophy is that you have to manage lands. You can't just draw a boundary around and put a fence and say do nothing. Because if you don't, nature is going to change it, and mother nature may not always change it in the direction that people think it should be or expect it to be. Plus, I think we have some real resources out there that can and should be used and replaced. And I think there's certainly one faction, if you will, that just wants to make everything primitive and pristine and so forth. And I think there's a limit of how much you can do that. And I go back to specific examples where the Forest Service, for example, over the years has gone Rare 1, Rare 2. Now their situation is there are some existing roads in this area left. People want to keep those totally untouched. And I guess from my perspective as the population increases, demands for these resources or products are going to increase. And how many times do you have to look at something before you say, I guess, enough is enough and here's how we're going to do this. You have one faction, for example, that wants to go back and live in the 1800's and I don't think this country is ready and willing to do that. On the other hand, I would say, you know, we are a very wasteful nation and society too in the United States. We've got life very easy and we're very oriented to disposal of this and disposal of that. So, you know, it works both ways. I just think that we need to maximize the use of the lands and resources that we have but to manage it in some fashion to address common and mutually acceptable goals and objectives. And therein lies the tough part because you have the extremes and then you have the little, the (?) people that are trying to make a living, raise families, have growth for communities and so forth. And it's a tough situation.

KATE: I think you just more or less answered some of my next question which was to ask what your management philosophies were. How you would characterize that? You

want to kind of revisit that?

DAVE: Again, I think the public lands are a valuable treasure chest of resources, and you've got a variety of resources, both the extracting commodity type, you've got the visual, the spiritual, and all that. And I think we have to look at wise use of all those resources in conjunction with every increasing populations and population demands. And yet I think we're blessed as far as other nations and countries because we do have such vast land areas and resource quantities. And I realize again there's extremities on both sides that one wants to preserve versus those that want to develop everything, and somehow, we've got to stay in the middle of where we can look at long-term needs, future generation needs, and so forth, and leave the country in as good of shape as we came into it, if you will, or this life.

KATE: So, what I hear you saying is we really have to maintain a balance.

DAVE: To the extent we can, we have to certainly understand and respect people's desires and needs, but it doesn't mean we're going to be able to meet all of those, certainly. It's impossible. And again, I have a real problem professionally and philosophically of those that want to go to the extremes of both total preservation or total production. It's a pretty generic statement, but I just think that, you know, if people are willing to work together and communicate that we can get closer to that middle ground than we have been, that they're willing to make some concessions and, again, accept others' interests, philosophies, and views and so forth and try to respect those, well, not try to respect, respect them but try to come to a common ground as much as possible. And, again, I have a real problem with people that profess to know a lot things, but they don't and aren't willing to learn and show their biases again, if you will, works in many directions.

KATE: So, in terms of trying to achieve, it's kind of your

day-to-day or year-to-year duties as a manager and in terms of having all these different issues and pressure groups and many different conflicting things that you have to balance, whether it's internally, you've got the biologists versus the, hydrologists or however it may spin out or, external. Do you have certain, I guess what I want to say is what works for you? How do you manage to find that balance? How do you go about approaching, coming to a decision?

DAVE: Well, again, I guess, Kate, that, you know, what the requirements are as far as policies, regulations, and so forth. I guess I've always been a firm believer in that. Some people like to bend or almost break those and I think right, wrong, or indifferent, they were established for a reason or the majority of folks want that direction. And you have to sort of live with that. Let them. On the other hand, I think you can work within those parameters and have some flexibility and make some adjustments here and there and still keep it appropriate and legal versus those that would say, you know, it's strictly by the book and this is the way you go. I think my experience in the Bureau has been such that it's been a pretty good organization like that. We try to have some flexibility within those guidelines and requirements versus other agencies that, you know, it says by law and regulation, this is the way it's going to be and that's it. So, I guess trying to, you know, get as much information as you can and knowing that the boundaries and parameters are working within that to address as many issues and concerns and desires that you can. And, again, I guess, going back to the philosophy of being firm but fair in that, you know, here's the laws but if we have some opportunities to work within those, we will do so and then treat everybody consistently in the process. And it's tough as far as attaining a balance because there are so many competing demands and interests, if you will. And, again, some people are reasonable, and some people are unreasonable. Their views and philosophies won't change. I think I've seen that in the organization as far as employees where some people have very strong beliefs and philosophies, and they won't change. They never change as they go out the door when they retire and that sort of thing versus those

that have been willing and able to make the change and seek changes in some cases.

KATE: I was going to ask you how you characterize your management style and to a certain extent, I think you've answered that, but you want to elaborate on that now?

DAVE: Well, again, I guess trying to be open, understanding, fair but consistent. Certainly, dedicated to the organization's goals and objectives and mission. I think it's been a good organization and we've done a lot of good for the public, American public, as well as the natural resources.

KATE: I have a couple of other questions, and then I think we should probably wrap this up.

DAVE: Okay.

KATE: We talked a little bit about your career and family and if you have anything to add to that, I was very interested in your comments that you felt it really helped, the moving around, in fact, it actually kind of helped strengthen your family. The stresses of the job, you know. How you managed that, too.

DAVE: I guess, certain observations, Kate, and I've run across people that, you know, there's a lot of good people in this country, and, you know, I've seen some where I really felt it was unfortunate because they'd never gone from a small geographic area their whole life to experience the diversities and differences, and values, and opportunities, and all those things. And I guess it kind of goes back to the old saying about you can't appreciate a man's situation until you walk in his shoes. I've gotten to go places, see things, work with people I would have never had the opportunity to do had I not worked for the Bureau and moved around, experienced that, and so forth.

And, you know, it's kind of like I was watching a ballgame the other day where they were talking about how you go through all kinds of plans and preparations and so forth, but when you actually go out and do it, you don't improve or experience the knowledges, skills, and abilities to do that. I guess I liken that to people who read management books. There's a lot of theory there, but unless you go out and try it and practice it and make some mistakes even, you don't learn it. And so I think by having moved around in different parts of the country, and, again, I've gone from the southwest where there's a lot of Hispanic/Indian culture, back to the East with mixed cultures back there, that sort of thing. I've worked on the ski patrol for years and it was interesting one time working with the western Indian area where there was some local folks there that, just real solid good people but their knowledge and understanding and so forth was limited. I don't mean they weren't intelligent, they hadn't been exposed to it and it was obvious. And I saw a young couple there that had gotten married and were trying to make a living off him running trap lines and her doing a few odd jobs and I felt really sorry for them that, I guess, they were happy and that was important, but they just didn't have the opportunity to learn and grow as individuals by experiencing these different things. And, to them, a long trip was like going two or three hundred miles versus cross-country or out of country or whatever. And, you know, I guess I felt like I had been blessed as far as going to Alaska and working up there and experiencing that kind of a geological, geographic experience and cultural thing versus many of the states within the United States.

I made one trip into Canada when I was back East. I've gone over to the Bahamas and finally to Hawaii. I've been to Mexico, not too far into it kind of a thing. But, you know, just experiences I normally wouldn't have had the opportunity to do. I think it's broadened myself personally. I think it's certainly made me more understanding and tolerant and patient to different views and attitudes and appreciating different people and their cultures. Probably think they're fully aware, but you know, dealing, for example, with some of the Indian people is they're very quiet, respectful people and a lot of people say well, you know, they're not very friendly and so

forth. Well, that's just their culture, and it takes a long time to earn the respect from them that you're an okay person or whatever kind of a thing. You know, the Hispanic culture, they're very family oriented, very religious, and very close tied to the land kind of a thing and you've got to understand that when you're dealing with people rather than bringing somebody in and, you know, we're going to do this and we're going to do that. I don't care what you think, this is the way it's going to be kind of thing. And you can really make or break a management situation because you either know or don't know that kind of situation.

KATE: I agree. Those things are really important.

DAVE: And, you know, I know one manager when I was in New Mexico was so frustrated that he didn't have a whole lot of choices. He had some seasonals that would go out and he'd say, well, don't we have some sort of dress code? Well, we really couldn't, didn't and couldn't enforce it, but here was these characters going out in long hair and thongs and cut-offs. Well, we had some of these old ranchers.

KATE: This is not the way to interface, yeah.

DAVE: That's not the way. No, you just don't deal that way and you're not going to get results. You're going to get resentment and that sort of thing, and you have to understand and appreciate that. I guess one of the tricks I kind of learned in the process too. A lot of times, you know, my experience with a lot of these ranchers, miners, and so forth, they tend to have a lot of respect for women. So, a lot of times, they have a female range con or something, they had a crusty old guy they need to deal with, they'd send this gal out there. He wouldn't rant and rave as much with that person as he would with one of the guys. These are just little things that you learn and utilize. And yet respect their independence and where they were coming from over the years and the sweat and toil they put into things and they see the government coming in and telling them what to do and how to do it. And how you do

it makes a big difference.

KATE: Absolutely. So, looking back over your career which has been very varied or maybe even just the last 10 years at the Medford District, is there something that you feel that you've done that you really feel has been a contribution, that you feel proud of?

DAVE: Well, again, I guess I feel like that we have done a better job of responding to the various publics' interests and needs. Listening and understanding without so much of the bureaucratic well, this is the way it's going to be folks, because it's good for you. I think that and then from my perspective is giving some of the managers, employees more discretion and flexibility in carrying out the things. And then supporting them when they do that. I guess it makes me feel good when I interact with a lot of the public groups is that they respect the organization overall and its employees and what they're doing under the circumstances that are pretty tough at times. And I guess I would hope that we've made some progress on teamwork although it's been a disappointment. I didn't feel like I've done as good a job as I wanted to do or intended to do. Getting this large of a workforce to really click as a team.

KATE: So, are there things that you might look back on and say, gee, I'd do this differently knowing what I know today?

DAVE: Well, probably, the one thing would be to just, I guess, to try to get even more involved with, again, groups, individuals both internal and external too. I've always been committed, dedicated, and put in many, many, many extra hours which was my doing, I mean, it was my choice. I wanted to do it to do a good job and maybe with shifting how I spent my time to do more of the interaction work with the outside interests as well as some of the internal things.

KATE: So, we've got a DM who is going to be coming on and I know we have an Acting that's been assigned here. What would be your words of advice? What should they know?

DAVE: Go find another job! I guess is to get and stay very involved. One of the things I found very beneficial to me, at least is I've enjoyed going to different group meetings and, you know, for example the Annual Cattlemen's Association Picnic and meetings and interacting with different folks like that and groups. Probably what I would say is I've been remiss in probably doing as much on the environmental side because I guess I've gotten a little biased and beat over the head about as much and I'm pretty reluctant to spend as much time with them as I probably should have. So, I said, interact with all interests a lot and communicate effectively with them. It may sound kind of trite but, you know, be honest and consistent in your dealings with people.

KATE: It's interesting to me that in the last few comments, your focus has been on the external relations with our different publics, that this is something that is obviously so very important in your line in terms of the job that you've done and, you know, somebody else would be expected to do.

DAVE: I think it's very important because, again, I think if you don't, people tend to either form their own opinions or make up their own judgements based on incomplete information, lack of information. And I think you need to hear from all sides rather than just one or two because if you don't, then you tend to, I'm not saying you become biased, but you tend to go with what you hear and you always hear one or two sides and that's the direction you tend to lean.

KATE: So, what's next for you? You probably don't. I don't know if you have any specific plans but do you see yourself taking this lifetime of knowledge and moving on

and doing something with it or are you looking forward to starting something really new and different?

DAVE: I guess right now my inclination would be to try to start something new and different just for a change. I'm not sure what that's going to be but definitely try to find something that I can do and would enjoy and contribute to but something different for a change.

KATE: Okay. No specifics yet?

DAVE: No.

KATE: Okay. Well, thank you, Dave.

DAVE: You're welcome.

KATE: Is there anything else that I, I know I've missed a lot. I feel we've covered a lot. It's a long career.

DAVE: No, I think that we've touched on pretty much the points that I wanted to make. But I would certainly encourage people to try things different, make changes, move around. I think they're beneficial and rewarding and enriching.

END OF INTERVIEW